Import of edible oil

†1664. SHRI KHAN GHUFRAN ZAHIDI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to promote import of edible oils; and

(b) if so, the quantity of edible oils imported during the year 2001-2002 and the estimated expenditure incurred thereon in foreign exchange?

THE. MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD): (a) and (b) The production of edible oil seeds & hence of edible oils in the country is not adequate to meet the domestic consumption demand. Therefore, import of edible oils (except copra/coconut oil) is under Open General License (OGL). During the year 2001-2002 (April-March) 42.14 lakh MTs of edible oils have been imported at an estimated value of Rs. 6474.47 crores, as per the statistical data of the Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence & Statistics, Kolkata.

Offtake of foodgrains by States

1665. SHRI BACHANI LEKHRAJ: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is no offtake of foodgrains by the States due to high Central issue prices;

(b) whether Government would consider to reduce issue price;

(c) whether it is a fact that various claims of Gujarat Government are pending since long for decision at High Power Committee; and

(d) if so, by when the meeting would be covened to settle the claim?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI U.V. KRISHNAM RAJU): (a) No, Sir. The offtake of wheat and rice from the Central Pool during the year 2001 -2002 increased to a record level of 312.68 lakh tonnes, as against 179.46 lakh tonnes during the preceding financial year. This increase, of 133.21 lakh tonnes, works out to an increase of 74% and is the highest ever in both absolute as well as percentage terms. Even during the current financial year, there is an upward trend of offtake.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) There is no proposal with the Government at present to reduce issue price.

(c) and (d) Based on the decision arrived in the High Powe*Committee (HPC) meeting held on 14.8.99 the claims of the Government of Gujarat for the Railway freight and forwarding charges in respect of the stocks of foodgrains lifted by road from other than designated depots fortheTPDS from 11.2.97 onwards have been/are being admitted by the FCI district offices after joint verification/scrutiny. For claims prior to 11.2.97, complete information is being collected and a meeting of the HPC will be convened shortly thereafter.

Request of Roller Flour Millers Association

1666. DR. A.K. PATEL: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any request from the Roller Flour Millers Association for reduction of open market sale price of wheat from FCL as has been done for North Zone;

(b) whether Government are exporting wheat at Rs. 4200 per ton;

(c) if so, the reasons for not providing wheat to Roller Flour Millers at the same rate; and

(d) what is Government's approach to ensure availability of cheaper wheat products in the market?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI U.V. KRISHNAM RAJU):(a)Yes,Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) To augment the availability of wheat for manufacture of wheat products, the Open Market Sale Scheme (Domestic) is being implemented through FCI. Under the Scheme wheat is made available for sale including to Roller Flour Mills at subsidized rates.